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## **What is Philo's position concerning natural and revealed religion?**

Philo was a Jewish philosopher who lived in 20BC and died in 50D. He was born in Alexandria and through his works he tried to create harmony between the Jewish philosophy and the Greek Philosophy. He had a staunch connection to the Greeks Stoic Philosophers. He was keen to point out that the Hebrew Bible if not carefully interpreted would blur the mankind's way of viewing God. He contended that through the explanation of his exegesis to the Sophists they opened their eyes to a new outlook of the Judaism. Though strongly linked with Judaism, his philosophy is said to be of paramount importance to the Christian Founding fathers. Christology is said to owe a debt to Philo since he formed the basis to some of the Christian founding principles. There are valid arguments developed in the course of 19th century which aver that Philo was one of the founders of Christianity.

His ideologies are said to have formed the basis in which the Jews found religious comfort and justifications. It is contended that he only paid attention to the philosophy which was in conformity with Jewish religion. His source of philosophy was the Jewish Bible which he held in high regard and considered it the root of truth not only in Judaism but other religions (Hume, p.

24). Philo has provided a comprehensive opinion on the natural and revealing religion. He was categorical on his response to the arguments supporting the existence of God based on the apparent created universe.

The ideology commonly referred as the teleological design whereby the role of God and the human intelligence is based on the universe. Philo stated that it was unreasonable to attribute a perfect creator by the virtue of the creation. In his words nature may have had the perfect order by itself and the requirement of a designer was a myth. The possibility of an imperfect creator was also a probability. According to him the probability of a poorly designed earth in the initial stages of creation is a factor that many theological philosophers have ignored.

Philo also held the view that the argument that one God designed nature is misleading since there is a possibility that many gods joined together to frame the Earth. He vehemently rejected the notion that there only existed one Deity who not only made the Universe but owns and controls life (Hume, p. 44). According to Philo the ideology that the Earth was created by an omnipotent, Omniscient, benevolent Deity, is based on ignorance.

He seemed to suggest that the world could perfectly exist without religion. However, his opinion is to be taken with caution since in his dialogue with Cleanthes he seems to contradict himself when he makes an opinion to imply that the design ideology is true hence losing the debate. Philo's change of position is of great philosophical significance but it still remains certain that to him religion and morality were creations of the mind which human beings could perfectly exist without. Philo asserts that organized religion is the source of all evils and it promotes selfishness by advocating on the salvation of one's soul.

The presence of wars persecutions and oppression is occasioned by the existence of religion. Religion also results to grief upon its followers. Philo contends that the religious people try to overstep their limits by trying to suggest what God is like. He states that the way the universe is has some relation to human intelligence and anything bigger cannot be revealed (Hume, p. 13).

### **What is the ontological argument for God's existence?**

The argument was first advocated for by Anselm of Canterbury, who was a monk and lived in the eleventh century. The argument was mainly to support the existence of God.

In the words of Anselm God was the greatest being that normal human beings can conceive. The highest being which is perfect in existence. The above statements are simply referred to as ontological argument. The Deity is held to be more perfect and supreme than human being. The concept of the existence of a God was said should not only exist in mind but also in reality (Hume, p. 78). The ontological argument has its proponents who share the same school of thought with Anselm. The most notable of these philosophers is French thinker Descartes.

He held the view that the existence of God could be grounded on the appearance of nature just the same way the mathematical theories could be inferred from the appearance of geometric shapes. In what he proudly named in his book the Fifth Meditation, he illustrated his opinion by citing the example of a triangle. He strongly concurred with Anselm that God is perfect and supreme. The argument is not grounded on any evidence or any form of

backing but on the proposition that the nature stands to explain everything. The ontological school of thought is grounded on the proposition that no bigger being than God can be imagined. The school of thought further states that the existence of God is an idea (Hume, p. 36). Alvin Plantinga is one of the most celebrated proponents of the ontological arguments.

He supported his existence of ideology using mathematical theories known as modal logic. He based his averments on the reasoning that if a thing is true then the probability of its necessity could not be ignored. He agreed with Descartes arguments of the shapes being a proof of geometric ideas while nature was the symbol of the existence of God. In addition, he stated that an omniscient, omnipotent and a perfect being.

The supreme existence and the supreme excellence are the main attributes associated with presence of God (Hume, p. 40). One of the profound Islamic Philosopher Mulla Sandra has been said to be a staunch supporter of the ontological argument. He labored to assemble his supporting arguments about the existence of God by using the empirical test. He majorly directed his attention to antecedent eternal necessity .

He stated that the existence of something supersedes its essence. In his analysis he stated that the existence of God is derived from the reality of existence. Where mans intellectual power has limited powers then there must be a greater power which exists to supplement that. He was keen to point out that many of the anti ontological philosophers concentrated on the definition of the God instead of the existence. Substantial critique has been leveled against this school of thought. Some of the criticism has been

counteracted and subsequently rendered invalid. However, some of the critique has remained unanswered and hanging at large. The most standing criticism was by Gottfried Leibniz who stated that if there could not sufficient demonstration of the existence of a perfect supreme being then the ontological argument could not hold water.

The most celebrated of all natural believers found it had to agree with the ontological argument. Though Thomas Aquinas believed in the existence of God, he disagreed with Anselm's proposal. He stated that the ontological view was helpful to those who completely knew the importance of God (Hume, p. 75).

## **What is the problem of evil? How does it relate to belief in God?**

The problem of evil has substantially been a very contentious point between who believe in the existence of God and those who object such believe. The main basis of theodicy is traced from the need to define and answer the presence of evil and a perfect Deity. It has been unconceivable to have a perfect God and another antagonistic evil force which is mainly concerned in doing the opposite of the God. The foregoing arguments have been hatched an engineered by Epicurus.

He stated that it was impossible to imagine evil and good existence. He further argued that one of the forces can exist but both can not exist in the same setting. In his several inferences, he stated that if there is a supreme powerful God on earth then evil could not exist. In the contrary he concluded that if there was a possibility that evil existed then the existence of God was

not possible. It is either the God existing or the evil (Hume, p. 66). Renowned philosophers have advanced the argument of Epicurus by stating that the existence of an all powerful God and evil is a creation of a logical contradiction and cannot in any way be considered correct. They state that if the all powerful God was the controller and all knowing then he would prevent the evil from existing.

According to Plantinga in his defense to the existence of God, he states that God is a free God who desires every individual to exercise free will. His contention is that God allows evil in order to portray his character of the supreme good God. Many philosophers seem to buy Plantingas ideology but still the question of incompatibility remains unanswered (Hume, p. 19). It is worth noting that theodicies are defenses put forward to defend the contention about the evil and God incompatibility.

The problem posed by evil is more clearly seen in instances when the hell suffering said to be a punishment to the evil doers. It has been held by the ontological philosophers that God can not defeat evil without the three main characteristics. Some philosophers have criticized this statement and stated that there is a possibility that if God existed then he is not entirely good. Ontological philosophers have been put at task to explain the natural evils. According to their argument evil exists to give mankind a chance to make choices based on free will.

The main difficult has been to explain how natural evils such as earthquakes occur while it is not within the powers of man to decide. It has been contended that due to consequences of sin the supreme God has deserted

the believers hence suffering from natural uncontrollable evils. A rather valid point has been put across to show how incompatible the free choice argument and the presence of heaven.

The problem caused by such contradiction is cured by the argument that the hell suffering is a problem created by believers due the abuse of the accorded free will. Questions such as the God would have created a man in the sense that he is immunity to sinning remain unanswered (Hume, p. 72).

### **Works Cited**

Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Raleigh, N. C: Alex Catalogue, 1990.